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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER OCI #0550/74
9 Jan. 1974Puja Goes to Moscow

In office less than a month, Hungarian Foreign Minister Friqyes Puja arrived in Moscow on January 8, for what probably are his formal protocol introductions. Substantive discussions are, however, not being neglected because Puja talked with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko for over two hours.

A Hungarian press report drew special attention to their "exchange of views" on the European security conference and "methods of settling the Middle East situation." Discussion of European security is certainly to be expected--it is topical and Puja headed the Hungarian delegation at the last conference session.

The oddly worded reference to the Middle East is curious, because it implies some special Hungarian role--either present or future--in the Middle East. There is no evidence available to substantiate this implication, and we can see no reason why Moscow would want to get the Hungarians involved. Poland is the only Eastern European member of the United Nations Emergency Force.

Reaching into domestic Hungarian politics, this could be an image-building exercise to help boost the stature of Puja. The recent promotion of the conservative Puja is undoubtedly unpopular with Hungarian liberals in the foreign ministry and may have caused some open complaining. Puja is reputed to have close ties with the Soviets, especially party secretary Ponomarev, and Moscow may be trying to show nationalistic Hungarians the possible benefits of such a relationship. It still seems doubtful, however, that they would entrust Puja with any meaningful Middle East assignment.

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The Hungarian Connection

The Hungarians may once again be acting as intermediaries for the Soviets in preparations for a new International Communist Conference. Andras Gyenes, a Hungarian party apparatchik who was active in the preparations for the 1969 conference, arrived in Rome on January 7, to talk with specialists in the Italian Communist Party. Nothing is yet known about the visit,

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but it comes less than a month after a PCI delegation visited Hungary.

Gyenes heads the Hungarian party's international relations department--the party's "foreign ministry"--and has major responsibility for maintaining relations with foreign Communist parties.

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Polish Officials Declare 1973 "A Very Good Year"

The Party politburo on January 8, professed joy over the returns on the Polish domestic situation during 1973. They found, Warsaw official media said, that "all the basic tasks of the year had been accomplished according to plan." Even housing construction--a project that has been failing and is loaded with political implications--was judged at least a partial success. It is obvious that the party, as usual, emphasized the positive, and in turn proclaimed that increased citizen activity would be required to equal or improve on 1973 this coming year.

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East Germany: Just Taking Account of the Market

The East Germans are adopting a surprised, self-righteous attitude toward the continuing refusal of the West Berlin Senat to pay a higher price for coal briquettes from the GDR. West Berlin resistance to the price increase, from \$28 to \$34 a ton, is presented by the East Germans as the Senat's "imposition of a halt on deliveries" of lignite.

On January 8, the East Berlin press archly observed that it was lucky for the West Berlin consumer that the price was not set by the free interplay of supply and demand. It added that it is "obvious to any sensible person" that the East German foreign trade enterprises must take account of price increases in the capitalist markets to which the GDR exports.

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Americanology in Hungary

A fledgling Hungarian effort at US studies has gotten a boost with the recent publication of An Introduction to

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Americanology by the well-known lexicographer Laszlo Orszagh. Best known for his several Hungarian-English dictionaries, Orszagh has written a pioneering work that is notable for its relatively objective review of the American scene.

Although Americanology is primarily a bibliographic work, the author tries also to describe contemporary American and to survey the sciences devoted to its analysis. In line with his interests, Orszagh heavily emphasizes history, literature, and language. The book thus ignores sociology and political science--probably because of political sensitivities--and only briefly covers such "secondary" interests as education, philosophy, and religion.

In the bibliographic sections, the number of Communist authors is kept at a minimum, and their works are clearly identified as "providing a Marxist analysis." Moreover, references espousing a non-Marxist viewpoint on the same subject are always included. The author claims to have introduced Thorstein Veblen's The Theory of the Leisure Class to Hungarians.

The 66-year old Orszagh seems uniquely qualified to break the ground for American studies in Hungary. He received part of his education at Rollins College, Florida, in the 1930s, and studied in the US in 1967 on a Ford Foundation grant. He has also edited a Hungarian-language volume on American literature and advised the American Council of Learned Societies in the preparation of a world dictionary.

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